

REMARKS

Applicant encloses an Excess Claim Fee Payment Letter for three additional dependent claims along with a Request for Continued Examination.

Claims 1-23 are all the claims presently pending in the application. Claims 1, 5-6, and 11-13 are amended to more clearly define the invention and claims 18-23 are added. Claims 1, 5-6 and 11-13 are independent.

Applicant thanks Examiners Huynh and Srivastava for the courtesies extended to the Applicant's representative during a personal interview on March 23, 2004. During the personal interview, the Examiners proposed amendments to the independent claims that would overcome the rejections. In particular, the Examiners agreed that the above amendments to the independent claims would more particularly point out the invention and clearly overcome the prior art rejections. This Amendment amends independent claims 1, 5-6 and 11-13 in accordance with the Examiners' very helpful suggestion.

These amendments are made only to more particularly point out the invention for the Examiner and not for narrowing the scope of the claims or for any reason related to a statutory requirement for patentability.

Applicant also notes that, notwithstanding any claim amendments herein or later during prosecution, Applicant's intent is to encompass equivalents of all claim elements.

In view of the foregoing amendments, and in light of the discussion and the suggestion provided by the Examiners during the March 23, 2004 personal interview, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1-23, all the claims presently pending in the Application, are patentably

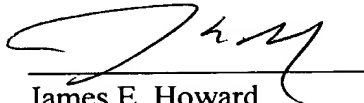
distinct over the prior art of record and are in condition for allowance. The Examiner is respectfully requested to pass the above application to issue at the earliest possible time.

Should the Examiner find the Application to be other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the local telephone number listed below to discuss any other changes deemed necessary in a telephonic or personal interview.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency in fees or to credit any overpayment in fees to Assignee's Deposit Account No. 50-0510.

Respectfully Submitted,

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